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Hometown History: Exploring the boat building history of Poquoson

POQUOSON, Va. — I recently visited the Poquoson Museum and talked with museum president Paul Whitlow about the history of Poquoson and the importance of the local boat building.

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Whitlow gave me a tour, "The room next door here is dedicated to boat building in Poquoson which is recognized up and down the East Coast." Situated along the Chesapeake Bay, the water has been the anchor of Poquoson's culture for generations.

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"Building log canoes, which were used by waterman throughout the East Coast in the early years of crabbing, oystering, fishing, etc." Whitlow continues, "It was all hand tools to cut the trees, shape the trees, bolt them together, and streamline them."

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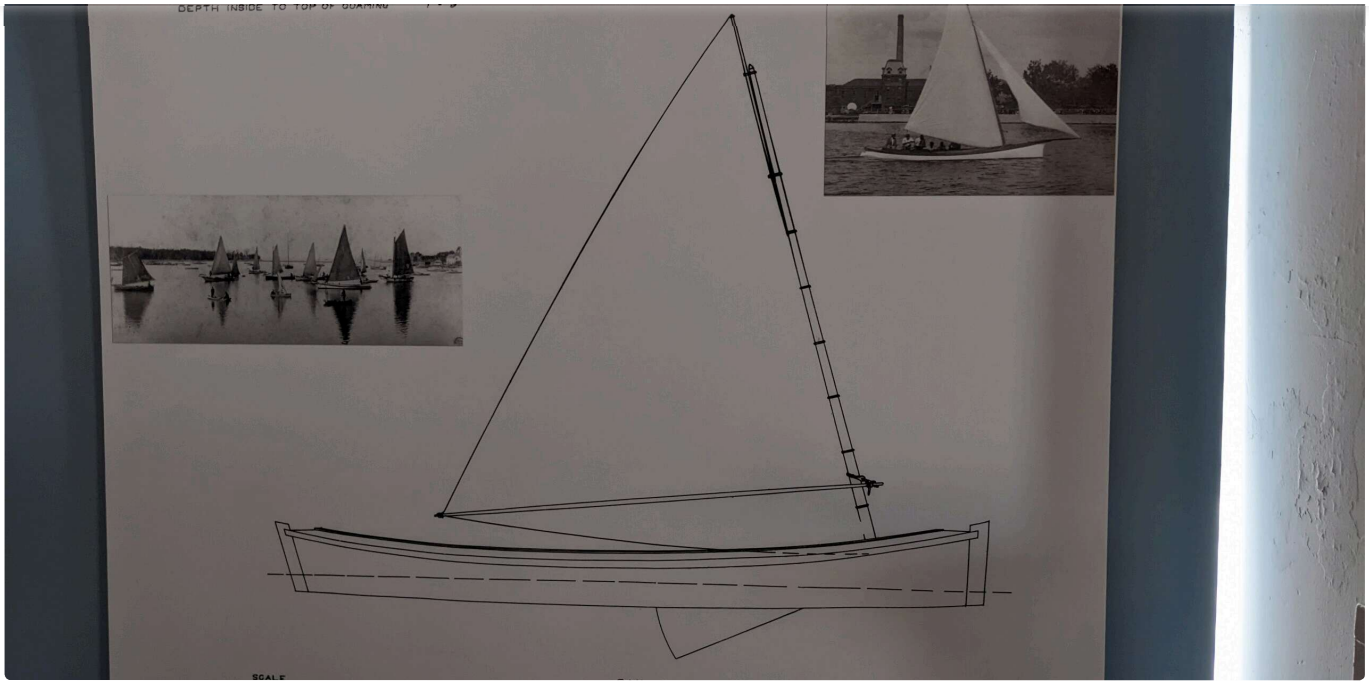

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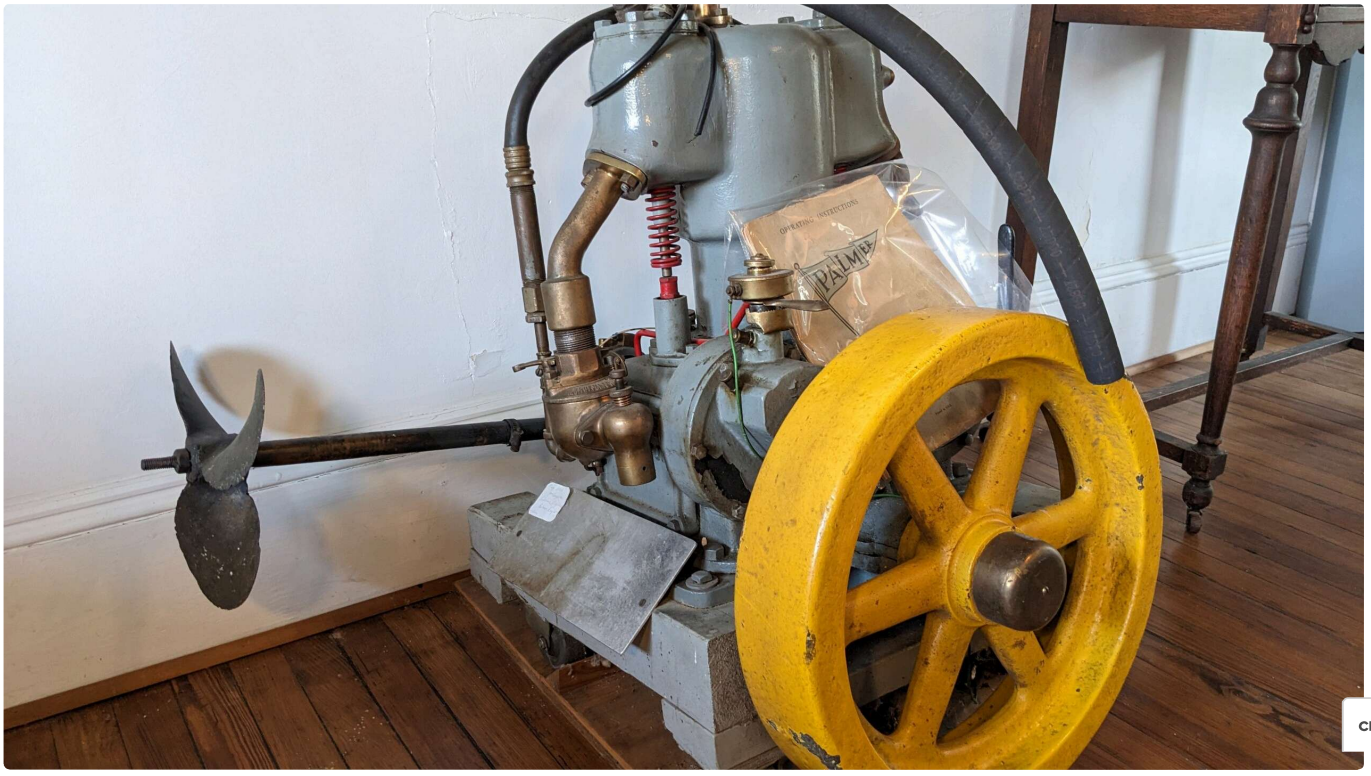
These wooden boats were originally wind powered... so no wind, no work. But that changed with the industrial revolution. "Palmer engines were introduced and put into these boats which helped streamline their process of making a living."



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The Poquoson Museum is located on Poquoson Ave near Poquoson Middle School. When you visit be sure to also explore the learning garden and walk the marsh trail.

A piece of local election history used into the 1950s is on display in Surry Co.

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